



ANNUAL REPORT

1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021

RHS Britain in Bloom Champion of Champions



Scottish Charity number SC 032395

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1 Introduction.

As a registered Scottish Charity (SC 032395), Beautiful Perth (BP) is required to prepare its accounts and an Annual Report of its endeavours and financial activity. This Annual Report summarises a year of challenging and limited activity during the year 2020-21, owing to the global COVID 19 pandemic and the national efforts to contain the spread of the virus. At our recent success Royal Horticultural Society's Britain In Bloom Champion of Champion's Award, which was announced in London on 25 October 2019, we could never have envisaged the global situation which we about to encounter within 4 months of this celebration. Our last face to face meeting was held in March of 2020 when we discussed how we could proceed with activities, at this stage assuming that this would be a short phase of disruption requiring enhanced health and safety procedures but embracing our continued activities. As the implications of the pandemic unfolded and our day to day lives were drastically altered, the immense value of green spaces in terms of health and wellbeing was unsurpassed and unprecedented. Beautiful Perth volunteers worked to support Perth and Kinross Council when their staff had been otherwise redeployed to essential services, providing welcome assistance to plant up and maintain areas within the City. Beautiful Perth also provided considerable emotional support for its volunteers during this period with regular contact for the many who were self-isolating. By virtue of lockdown measures, activity has been limited and primarily focused on maintaining the award-winning Riverside Park and developing a National Collection of *Carneas* for the future. A number of lilies were also donated from the National Lily Collection. Funding was also secured for the Riverside Heather Collection from several sources, including the Gannochy Trust, and the PKC Community Environment Challenge Fund. This was applied for to improve signage and interpretation, provide more heathers, improve car park surfacing and to provide financial assistance in the publication of a book documenting the history of the Perth Nursery. My sincere thanks to the Vice Chair, Jenny Williams, whose dedicated work has proved invaluable to the Chairman – a true driving force in Beautiful Perth's successes.

My thanks are also conveyed to both Monica Straughan and Elspeth Bruce for undertaking the roles of Treasurer and Secretary respectively. Both are important and key positions, and we are also grateful to Monica for her duties on media promotion through press releases, the website and social media.

I would like to thank all our volunteers and Trustees for their loyal support to Beautiful Perth and each other through the past challenging year. We are also very grateful to the partner organisations, sponsors and supporters who have remained loyal to Beautiful Perth throughout this time.

2 Governance

Structure, governance and management

Beautiful Perth's governing document is a Constitution, adopted in 2001 and most recently revised in 2019. The charitable objectives of Beautiful Perth are

- to improve the local environment and quality of life in Perth
- to enhance environmental education through environmental campaigns and projects
- to advance community development by fostering community spirit and public participation

Our governing body is a Committee of Trustees, drawn from the private sector, public sector, local residents and voluntary organisations. All committee members are volunteers and no remunerations are paid.

As required by the Constitution, the Trustees monitor the Association's financial position via monthly reports to the committee by the Treasurer. Audited accounts of the Income and Expenditure and of the Balance

Sheet at the end of the financial year are normally presented to the Annual General Meeting but this year, due to Covid-19, they have been scrutinised and approved by the Trustees online.

We have a set of Policies and Procedures in place, covering Health & Safety, Finance, The Environment, Plastics, Volunteering, Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults, Equal Opportunities and Intergenerational Working.

AGM and Election of Office Bearers

Because of Covid-19 social distancing rules (see para 2 above) our Annual General Meeting had to be cancelled. The existing Trustees will continue to fulfil their roles until such time as normal circumstances can apply again:

Chairman: John Summers

Vice Chair: Jenny Williams

Secretary: Elspeth Bruce

Treasurer: Monica Straughan

Trustees: Alistair Chalmers, Fiona Hair, Graham Harbut, Tracey Hutton, Tom Lowdon, Barbara McDonald, Alison Morrison, Sylvia Stuart

Independent Examiner: We are very grateful to Lorna Sharp FCCA, our new Independent Examiner.

Finance: Full details of the Association's finances are presented in the Accounts and Treasurer's Notes. The Association is in a satisfactory financial position and my thanks to those who support us for their continued contributions. Thank you to the Council for its continued financial support, to other funders and supporters including the Gannochy Trust and the Perthshire Advertiser, and to our generous sponsors Abelio Scotrail, Earnside Energy, Holiday Inn Express Perth, Kilmac Ltd, Live Active Leisure, Morris Leslie Ltd, St Johnstone FC St Leonard's in the Fields Church and NFU Mutual.

3 Key Projects 2020-21

COVID 19 restrictions prevented the significant development of key projects with limited activity being focussed on;

- **Riverside Park**

Strategically poised on the banks of the River Tay, Riverside Park in the heart of Perth encompasses the Heather Collection, Rodney Garden and Norie Miller Park. The collection was designed by PKC Landscape Architect, Sue Allen, and over 16,000 heather plants, from 550 varieties have been planted up and maintained by Beautiful Perth volunteers since 2012. The current aspiration is to further extend the number of beds and heather varieties in the collection and to work towards creating a national collection of the species "*Erica carnea*". Riverside Park also has built heritage of historical significance, such as the Kinnoull Graveyard and Aisle – working in partnership with PKC, substantial stonework restoration has taken place to preserve this built heritage for the future and is ongoing.

- **Oakbank Corner**

Sited at one of Perth's gateway points, this area has been cleared of overmature planting and is to be replanted.

4 Horticultural Activities. As well as our flagship Heather Collection in Riverside Park, our volunteers worked on a range of sites across Perth as and when Covid guidelines allowed:

- **Curfew Row** is now well established and is looked after by our volunteers in partnership with the Royal Scottish Geographical Society (RSGS). A bug hotel occupies the site, built with the assistance of Perth's Men's Shed. Planters at the historical Fair Maid's House are also now maintained by Beautiful Perth in partnership with the RSGS.
- Beautiful Perth volunteers continue to enhance **local neighbourhood sites** such as **Craigie Crossroads** and continue to maintain colourful planters with seasonal bedding and bulbs to the delight of passers-by and residents alike.
- The **Cherrybank Corner** site has again been enhanced with the planting up of 5 slate planters, providing colour in Spring and Summer.
- Our volunteers continue to work in partnership with **St Leonard's in the Fields Church** to ensure a breath-taking show of non-stop begonias in their display beds in Summer and during Spring, a welcome riot of mixed *Narcissi* (we source the plants and put them in the ground; we keep them weed free and the church pays for the plants and undertakes the watering – a great and equal partnership).
- In November 2020 daffodil bulbs were planted within the grounds of Perth Reservoir, which overlooks Perth Royal Infirmary as a thank you to the NHS and also to provide some interest for the patients within the wards overlooking the site.
- **Snowdrop Peace Walk** Project. Snowdrops previously planted 'in the green' alongside the River Tay have now established successfully and specimen snowdrops have been planted around the Millais frame and in Kinnoull Churchyard. This will link with the National Trust for Scotland's Branklyn Garden and will feature in the annual national Snowdrop Festival.

5. Community Engagement, Participation and Partnership Working

Partnerships are key to our success and we continue to have valuable working relationships with both long-standing supporters and new partners. Together, we really do make a difference and listed below are some of the people and groups who have made valuable contributions to our success. I am very grateful to all those involved – the full list of our 67 active partnerships can be found at Annex 1 on page 9. Key partnerships include:

Perth and Kinross Council: The positive and longstanding partnership with Perth and Kinross Council's Community Greenspace Team continues to help us deliver beneficial outcomes in horticultural excellence, environmental responsibility and community participation. We also have support from wider council teams (see list at the end of this document). Our collaborative working is beneficial and ensures positive outcomes in helping keep Perth beautiful. Jane Keith and Carolyn McKenzie of Perth and Kinross Council's Westbank operation, together with the Council's Horticultural Apprentices and Community Payback Team, have provided invaluable advice and assistance across a number of sites. However, given COVID 19 the dynamics of these partnerships have changed owing to redeployment but we are confident that these partnerships can be resurrected once the pandemic has passed.

Schools: Partnership working temporarily suspended during 2019/20.

6. Environmental Responsibility

Activities have been limited to working on a City Centre anti-graffiti campaign and financial assistance with equipment purchase (High Pressure Washer)

7. **Local Awards** - No local awards have taken place this year.

8. Conclusion

Our motivation is to make Perth a beautiful place to live, work and visit and to return to normal active operations soon. It is anticipated that more volunteers will be recruited in response to personal re-evaluations post pandemic, and in recognition of the value of their local environment in terms of health and wellbeing, social interaction and its positive relationship with good mental health.

The backing from Local Councillors and staff from Perth and Kinross Council is essential to the success of Beautiful Perth and is much appreciated. We have been grateful for continuing sponsorship support from private sector companies during 2020-21 and a new sponsor has been secured.

As Chairman I must thank all the Executive Committee Members, Office Bearers and volunteers who have helped charter Beautiful Perth through this challenging year with great tenacity, loyalty and good will.

John Summers

John P Summers OBE, Chairman

13th April 2021



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